and 'a would manage you his piece thus : and 'a would about, and about, and come you in, and

an interlude or masque which actually existed and was very popular in Shakspeare's age: and seems to have been compiled from Mallory's Morte Arthur or the History of King Arthur then recently published and the favourite and most fashionable romance.

That "Mile-end Green" was the place for public sports and exercises we learn from Froissart.

Theobald remarks on this passage: "The only intelligence I have gleaned of this worthy knight (Sir Dagonet) is from Beaumont and Fletcher, in their Knight of the Burning Pestle."

The commentators on Beaumont and Fletcher's Knight of the Burning Pestle have not observed that the design of that play is founded upon a comedy called The Four Prentices of London with the Conquest of Jerusalem: as it hath been diverse Times acted at the Red Bull by the Queen's Majesty's Servants. Written by Thomas Heywood. 1613. For as in Beaumont and Fletcher's play a grocer in the Strand turns knight-errant making his apprentice his 'squire &c. so in Heywood's play four apprentices accoutre themselves as knights and go to Jerusalem in quest of adventures. One of them the most important character is a goldsmith another a grocer another a mercer and a fourth an haberdasher. But Beaumont and Fletcher's play though founded upon it contains many satirical strokes against Heywood's comedy the force of which are entirely lost to those who have not seen that comedy.

Thus in Beaumont and Fletcher's Prologue or first scene a citizen is introduced declaring that in the play he "will have a grocer, and he shall do admirable things."

Again Act I. Sc. I. Rafe says: "Amongst all the worthy books of achievements I do not call to mind that I have yet read of a grocer-errant: I will be the said knight. Have you heard of any that hath wandered unfurnished of his 'squire and dwarf? My elder brother Tim shall be my trusty 'squire, and George my dwarf."

In the following passage the allusion to Heywood's comedy is demonstrably manifest. Act IV. Sc. I.

"*Boy.* It will show ill-favouredly to have

a grocer's prentice court a king's daughter

** *Cit.* Will it so, sir? You are well read in histories: I pray you, who was Sir Dagonet? Was he not prentice to a grocer in London? Read the play of The Four Prentices where they toss their pikes so.[1]

In Heywood's comedy Eustace the grocer's prentice is introduced courting the daughter of the king of France; and in